A Reinforcement of Religious Understanding of High School Students on Radicalism During Pandemic

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Abstract
Terrorism as a manifestation of radicalism seems to arise and sink. The segment of radicalism is the teenagers at the high school level. This because they are the transition from childhood to adulthood. The positive thinking mindset is seen with clarity of thought and brings the pandemic phenomenon as resilience to counteract radical thought patterns. The purpose of this study is to make the pandemic period a momentum for

Kata kunci: Radikalisme, Sekolah Menengah Atas, Pandemik
strengthening students' religious understanding as a counter to radicalism. This study is qualitative research with a content analysis approach to social media content. The results show that there are 5 (five) ways to strengthen religious understanding as an effort to deradicalize high school students, namely: (1) Fostering logical thinking patterns wrapped in religion (science spiritualism), (2) Presentation of neutral readings so that their direction of reasoning is organized, balanced between thoughts state and religion, (3) Cultivating balance and moderate attitudes, (4) Modelling attitudes and behaviours that are easy to imitate from teachers and education leaders, (5) optimizing the role of parents to assist students in distance learning patterns, learning from home, or online learning.

Keywords: Radicalism, Student High School, Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The issue of terrorism is not new, the phenomenon sometimes arises and sometimes sinks, one day it can reappear if there is a violent upheaval in the name of religion. Terrorism is a form of action from the notion of radicalism that is the background of violent actions (Dauff & Dike, 2019; Rahman, 2021). Terrorism is not a monopoly of a particular religion, but exists in all religions, all groups, sects, and even the potential to grow in every human individual. Indonesia has a Muslim majority population, so what is highlighted is Islam. As, terrorism is an extraordinary crime against humanity, so that its handling approach should also not be ordinary.

Radicalism as the ideology behind terrorism targets various segments, including the youth segment. The target is high school students, especially students with a narrow understanding of religion. Students are led to take action to justify the movement to establish an Islamic caliphate or Islamic State and formalize the Islamic rule in the life of the nation and state (Dinnata, 2020; Rodli, 2013; Shaleh & Zamroni, 2020). This triggers the stigma of students' understanding that they are justified if they think militantly and even approach radicals. The forms of activities include: seminars (incidental), teaching and cadre (routine), radio broadcasts, bulletins, establishment of Islamic boarding schools and formal educational institutions.

High school students are teenagers between the ages of 12-21, where this period is a transition period from the mindsets of children to adults. Its activities are more directed at showing ego identity. Approval or acceptance of a value is the initial stage of the 5 stages of a person's attitude or affective domain. (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964).
According to Article 1 Paragraph 1 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, "education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for himself, society, nation and State" (Presiden RI, 2003). This law implies that education must be able to develop intellectual, moral or personality, and motor potentials. The next educational goal is to achieve religious spiritual strength, be able to control oneself, have a personality, and have the intelligence, morals, and skills needed for oneself, society, nation and state (Muchith, 2016).

According to linguistic terminology, radical is much different from terror. Radical is a process in earnest to practice success or ideals that are carried out in positive ways. Along with the dynamics and patterns of movement of groups in society, radical and terror have closely related meaning, namely radical is the embryo of terror movement (Muchith, 2016). This addresses to an analysis that if you have a radical mindset, then you have a great chance of growing acts of terror.

The seeds of radicalism in the world of education can take various forms. Between 2011-2015 KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission) recorded 1764 cases of violence. Based on monitoring in 9 provinces, 87.6% of children became victims of violence in the school environment, and 78.3% of children became perpetrators of violence and ironically mostly because they had been victims of violence or seen violence perpetrated against others (Setyawan, n.d.). The survey results from the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta in 2017 presented data that 34.3% of respondents from young people agreed that the movement against non-Muslims was jihad. One of the most influential access is the use of the internet. So far, the use of social media by students has reached 85%. (Nugraha & Fauzan, 2020; PPIM, 2018a, 2018b). A series of suicide bombings in 2012-2018 shows a phenomenon that deserves serious attention. (Azanella, 2018; Karsono, 2018). This phenomenon is in line with the results of the Wahid Institute survey. Wahid Institute Director Zannuba Ariffah Chafsoh said that "the trend of intolerance and radicalism in Indonesia tends to increase from time to time". (Wahid Institute, 2020).

During this pandemic, students are served school materials using Gadget media. This media accompanies them almost every day as a learning medium. (Handayani, 2020;
Salsabila et al., 2020; Zulfitria et al., 2020). This is an opportunity for actors to infuse radical content in lessons and advice content (PPIM, 2018a). So, there is a need for a breakthrough on how to prevent global currents that are involved in rolling radical ideas among students in such a way as to prevent conflicts between religion, state and nation.

This is a content analysis study of the radicalism research of high school students during the pandemic. This study intends to complement the findings of previous research related to the religious strengthening of high school students during the pandemic.

The method used in this study was library research, namely research that seeks to collect data from social media content as the main object of the analysis. The primary data source came from previous research that discusses radicalism in high school students with various perspectives. Secondary data was taken from books, magazines, websites and others. The data collection technique was done by means of documentation while the technical analysis used content analysis.

Content analysis has the aim of describing the trend of the content of the communication/message, tracking the development of science, detecting the presence of hidden propaganda or ideology and identifying the intent and nature of the communicator/writer (Zuchdi, 1993). The steps taken are to formulate the purpose of the analysis, formulate the research concept, perform the coding process and input data analysis.

**RADICALISM AMONG YOUTH**

In English the word radical can mean extreme, comprehensive, fanatical, revolutionary, ultra and fundamental (Hornby, 2000). In the Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary; Radical is believing or expressing the belief that there should be great or extreme social or political change (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2008). Radical is believing or expressing the belief that there must be a major or extreme social or political change. Radicalism means the doctrine or practice of adherents of radicalism or extreme understanding (Nuh, 2016).

Talking about radicals and youth has its own uniqueness. Adolescents with the development of ego identity are interesting to discuss considering that they are human beings who are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. Most of their life is outside the home, including at school.
Associations at school encourages to accept every new thing that has not been taught at home or to continue the doctrines that have been obtained at home, including the doctrine of religion. They gain an understanding of religious teaching from the educational curriculum in each school equipped by extra-curricular activities in the form of rohis (Islamic spirituality).

Fachri Aidulsyah et al (Aidulsyah et al., 2017) found students' interest in participating in rohis activities at Surakarta State Senior High School. According to him, there are various characteristics among fellow rohis activists that differ from each other in understanding and interpreting Islam. The pattern of understanding of religion is categorized as liberal, moderate, mystical, or extremist. Furthermore, there is a typology of ideological paradigms, namely: modernist (tolerance between different religions in the life at schools), revivalists (rejecting the existence of a democratic system so that they do not actively participate in activities that regarded to be democracy and want to live their lives like the era of the Apostle) and transformative (applying modern Islamic ideology by positioning the rohis in the middle to eliminate tendencies towards one particular sect).

In addition to the typology of ideological paradigms, there is also a typology of mentoring networks implemented by the State Senior High School Rohis in Sukoharjo, namely: (1) teacher patterns which include PAI (Islamic religious education) teachers and/or rohis coaches, (2) student patterns, either through alumni or those who are members of the Student Activity Unit, (3) the general pattern is mentoring conducted by NGOs, namely LPR (teenager care agency) Pioner and LPP (youth care agency) Gemilang (Sofanudin, 2017).

Students' interest in religion leads them to read books that are light, straightforward and effective. There is a tendency to read puritan books by Felix Y. Siauw. According to them, Felix Y. Siauw's book is very simple, straightforward and easy to digest and understand (Yani, 2017). In addition, the delivery of the material using images and pictures are interesting and easily understood by them. Felix Y. Siauw's work originates from the thought of Taqiyyudin al-Nabhani, a figure in the Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) movement. What Felix conveys in his book is purely Hizb ut-Tahrir's thoughts, which are ideologically opposed to what is considered heresy (Yani, 2017).

The spread of radicalism and intolerance is also carried out through social media with the main target being young people. They take advantage of Facebook, Instagram
and other channels from social media accounts. They are also very happy if the mainstream media facilitates them to exchange information about the values of radicalism. (Anonimous, 2020, 2021b). In the end, the readers, with the segment of students, are of the view that the Islamic system of government (*khilafah Islamiyah*) in turn will be the best alternative to a democratic system that is full of shortcomings. The belief that Islam should become a state system has made rohis actively fight for several Islamic agendas at the school level. Such as advocating the use of long skirts for girls and trousers for boys in the school environment, and other actions (anti-smoking, anti-valentine day) (Habibullah, 2014).

THE ROOTS OF RADICALISM IN YOUTH

To know the main causes of the growth of radicalism in adolescents, it is necessary to first see how the roots of radicalism can be entrenched and difficult to unravel. According to Yusuf al-Qardawi (Al-Qardhawi, 1406), the emergence of the radicalism movement was caused by many factors, namely: (1) Partial religious knowledge through a doctrinal learning process. (2) Literal in understanding religious texts so that radical circles only understand Islam from the skin, but lack insight into the essence of religion. (3) Busy with secondary problems such as moving the fingers when *tasyahud* (final sitting position in prayer), lengthening the beard, and raising the pants while forgetting the primary problems. (4) Excessive in forbidding many things that actually burden the people. (5) Weak in historical and sociological insight so that their fatwas often contradict the benefit of the people, common sense, and the spirit of the times. (6) Not infrequently appears as a reaction to other forms of radicalism such as the radical attitude of secularists who reject religion. (7) Fight against social, economic, and political injustice in society.

In addition to these seven factors, Azyumardi Azra (Azyumardi Azra, 2011) added that the emergence of radicalism also stems from: (1) The ongoing social conflict with intra and inter-religious nuances during the reformation period is caused by various very complex factors. (a) Euphoria of freedom and will without caring about other parties, resulting in symptoms of decreased tolerance. (b) The continuing political and social fragmentation, especially among the political, social, and military elites, which affects the grassroots and creates a latent and widespread horizontal conflict. (c) Inconsistency in law enforcement. (d) Widespread disorientation and dislocation in Indonesian society,
due to difficulties in everyday life. As a result, these crushed and exposed individuals or groups can easily engage in emotional acts, and may even be hired to commit unlawful and violent acts. (2) Through the internet, apart from using paper media, radical groups also use cyberspace to spread books and information about jihad.

Attitudes and behaviors that show the existence of religious-based radical understanding (Masduqi, 2013) are: (1) Often claiming a single truth and misleading other groups who disagree. (2) Making it difficult for Islam, which is actually light to be heavy, by considering recommended worship as if it were obligatory and hated as if it were ban. (3) Mostly excessive in religion that is not in place. In preaching they put aside the gradual method used by the Prophet, so that their preaching actually made ordinary Muslims feel fear and objection. (4) Rude in interacting, loud in speaking and emotional in preaching. These characteristics of preaching are in stark contrast to the politeness and gentleness of the Prophet's preaching. (5) It is easy to be suspicious of others outside the group. (6) It is easy to disbelieve to fight people or groups who have different opinions.

Rubaidi (2008) adds that the Islamic radicalism movement also has the following characteristics: (1) Making Islam the final ideology in regulating individual life and also political administration. (2) Islamic values adopted by adopting their sources in the Middle East as they are without considering social and political developments when the Qur'an and hadith were present on this earth, with contemporary local realities. (3) Because attention is more focused on the text of the Qur'an and hadith, this purification is very careful to accept all cultures other than Islamic origin (Middle Eastern culture) including being careful to accept local traditions for fear of mixing Islam with heresy. (4) Rejecting non-Middle Eastern ideologies including Western ideologies, such as democracy, secularism and liberalization, because they do not directly refer to the Qur'an and hadith. (5) The movement of this group is often at odds with the wider community, including the government.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REINFORCEMENT OF RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING

Seeing the root of the problem of radicalism, the radicals were mapped again targeting high school students. On average, the root of the problems that arise in them is half-hearted religious knowledge through a doctrinal and literal learning process in
understanding religious texts. They understand Islam from their skin and even lack insight into the essence of religion.

During this pandemic, radical understanding may be silent without a sound, but during the new normal, they thrive because of the long quarantine. This has to be watched out for because the effects of the pandemic have targeted various sectors, including the cessation of religious activities that have been censored and banned. Many ways have been done to counteract radical ideas among high school students, such as strategies in the learning process in the classroom using methods of active learning and Qur'anic learning. Outside the classroom learning process, religious activities are held in the form of worship teams at schools, in collaboration with the police such as Sat. Bintal (mental building unit), and Sat. Binmas (community building unit), in collaboration with the provincial ministry of religion, held workshops and religious outreach in schools (Sary, 2017).

Another way that can be used is to apply the mindset and personality of balance, moderate and prioritize universal truth. The next step is to make regulations on teacher protection, so that teachers are not easily subject to discriminatory treatment, threats from any party. With the application of protection regulations, teachers can carry out their duties at the same time do not conduct arbitrarily to anyone, especially to students (Muchith, 2016).

From the government segment, the approaches taken are hard and soft ones. The hard approach was carried out by Detachment 88 which succeeded in finding the point of terror, but received many criticisms. The soft approach was carried out by BNPT (national counter-terror agency), but BNPT's efforts were rejected by transnational organizations, where they considered that what BNPT was doing was a Western program. If BNPT continues deradicalization, then transnationals can use this frame as delegitimization of the government. They assume that the caliphate is the world's solution (Hermastuti, M. D., Windiani, R., & Wahyudi, 2016).

Islamic boarding schools also play a role in tackling radicalism. Islamic boarding schools have a major contribution in efforts to build peace building through the application of religious values, cultural values and democracy which are marked by tolerance efforts towards adherents of other religions, towards people of different religious sects and in understanding religious life in society. The model is by providing
an example, increasing independence, and developing humanist teaching to students and the community (Fitriani, 2015).

Deradicalization can invite the kyai -the name of religious leaders in Islam-. The trick is to map the typology or level of people who are exposed to radical affect. First-level leaders or ideologues. The way that can be taken is with a large-scale campaign about their doctrines that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings. Campaigns can be carried out through print and electronic mass media, including through Friday sermon, teaching community, learning congregations and so on. Campaigns like this target two directions at once, namely resistance to radical ideologies and keeping society moderate. Middle-level leaders or ideologues. These characters can be touched but difficult to talk to, so it requires a special way to approach them. For example, by involving the leaders of Islamic boarding schools or Islamic organizations with a credible reputation and integrity to invite them to dialogue. The method of picking up the ball or going down to the bottom or home visit, slowly but surely will be able to convey the message to a higher level. Third, followers. Their appearance is more ‘fierce’ than their leaders but can be invited to dialogue. (Rokhmad, 2014).

The way to strengthen religious understanding of high school students is to instill a science-spiritualism mindset. What is spiritual-science? What does this have to do with radicalism?

As high school students, they will struggle with science subjects, including physics, biology or mathematics. Here they are invited to think using logic wrapped in religion.

The emergence of Covid-19 raises the perspective of Jabariah Qadariyah. Jabariah’s perspective, positioning Covid-19 as the power of God. It makes no sense when Covid-19 is compared to Allah SWT. Qadariyah's perspective, Covid-19 is just a disease and humans are able to overcome it with social distancing, hand washing, and wearing a mask. From the above description, learners are invited to be able to formulate this ideology with balance.

The attitude of balance means to consider every natural event that occurs is the power of Allah SWT, but human beings are given the power to try to change/improve the natural events to be full of wisdom. The frame that has been built, will grow a moderate attitude, not easy to accuse, not anti-stability and an attitude of support for every effort made by the government.
What is also important is the internalization of the attitude of balance and moderation so that it will create a tolerant attitude towards people who have different beliefs, or disagree with him. This internalization plays an important role in realizing the character of students to be students able to think balance, moderate and be tolerant. This requires support from the environment and when in school the teacher plays a very important role to provide understanding and at the same time as a good example for them (Kamal, 2017). During the covid-19 pandemic and post-pandemic, the role of parents became more important as distance learning was implemented in schools around the world. So that the school in this case the teacher must establish intensive communication with parents or guardians in carrying out learning and internalization of tolerant character, can be with social media such as whatsapp group, zoom, meet or other platforms used in the school (Sopiah, 2020).

By reviewing history, it was known that basically science in Islam is not new. The existing potential understand of science in Islam should still be developed until now. Thus, students are trained to integrate science and spirituality so that there is no dichotomy of science that has been carried out so far. If Muslims view this pandemic with the Jabariyah-Qadariyah frame, it will only lead to a separation between religion and science. Connoisseurs of the dichotomy of knowledge are not Muslims, but people who want Islam to be labeled secular and anti-government.

There is nothing wrong with high school students knowing the history of science that has developed during the Umayyad and Abbasid powers. This is not meant to lull, but to understand and explore, how at that time, science was wrapped with philosophy and wisdom. Scientists of the past learned in an integrated manner from various kinds of knowledge in a large container of philosophy and wisdom. Therefore, Islamic scientists are not only good at philosophy, logic, mathematics or medicine, but spiritualism and transcendence.

Why this is so, this is because they continue to seek the truth that Allah has given in the form of natural signs. The beginning of philosophy is a person's love for science or the search for truth. This is where a Muslim is defined as not only sourced from transcendental values and spiritualism, but it is on the guidance of Allah that Islamic scientists continuously observe immanent reality in search of truth, not justification.
Islamic scientists in their glorious century made spiritualism the basis of scientific attitudes.

Thus, high school students cannot assume that covid-19 is God's army sent to kill the enemies of Islam. They must continue to be given reinforcement that everyone has the potential to be affected by this disaster. So, if during this pandemic they are still thinking negatively, it means that students are not smart to read social phenomena, where the martyrs also come from the world of education and boarding schools.

High school students should not be given a gap to assume deviant. They must be given neutral readings during the pandemic so that their direction of reasoning is in order, balanced between state and religious thinking.

The role of schools, education offices, religious teachers is expected to be able to provide models of attitudes that are easy to emulate. The model from the teacher is easier for students to absorb because they spend more time at school.

As the results of previous researches (Anonimous, 2021a; Hasniati, 2017; Sofanudin, 2017), this study presents recommendations to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to: 1) develop regulations for increasing the duties and functions of the Regency/City Ministry of Religious Affairs and Islamic Religious Education Teachers related to spiritual development in high school; 2) collect data related to the parties who hold religious mentoring organized by high school rohis outside of Islamic Religious Education Teachers; 3) formulate regulations for the creation of a religious atmosphere in each general education unit with the mainstreaming of Islam rahmatan lilalamin; 4) conduct a book analysis of the values of radicalism; 5) deradicalization through social media content primarily as a learning medium; and 6) standardize the topics of religious studies in schools, especially regarding mentoring activities in schools.

**CONCLUSION**

Radicalism in education is a potential threat to the peaceful survival of the Republic of Indonesia. Radicalism needs to be addressed as a whole and comprehensively by working together between schools, parents, students and the community. The right synergy will produce the right solution. During this pandemic, there are 5 (five) ways to strengthen religious understanding as an effort to deradicalize high school students,
namely: (1) Fostering logical thinking patterns wrapped in religion (science spiritualism), (2) Presentation of neutral readings so that their direction of reasoning is in order, balance between state and religious thinking, (3) Cultivating balance and moderate attitudes, (4) Modeling attitudes and behaviors that are easy to imitate from teachers and education leaders, and (5) optimizing the role of parents to assist students in distance learning patterns, study from home, or study online.

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